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The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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Our New Look --

You will forgive, we trust, a little self-consciousness on the part of the editors as THE MINISTERS' QUARTERLY presents itself in a new format under a broadened editorial board and policy. It's an "old saw" that you can't tell a book by its cover, and perhaps no trick of the printer's trade can add a cubit to our stature. It is our hope, however, that by slightly improved packaging, THE QUARTERLY may make a better bid for your interest amid the deluge of attractive material which overwhelms ministers' desks.

* * *

Our chief ambition, however, is to present you with a publication of greater merit; one which will not only enhance your ministry, but will constitute a cohesive force among the ministers of our widely scattered Congregational Christian fellowship, and which will prove provocative to discussion of our common concerns and interests.

* * *

We shall continue to be favored with the mellow editorial comment of our respected senior editor, *Gaius Glenn Atkins,* whose "labor of love" THE QUARTERLY has been all of its natural life.

* * *

We shall continue to solicit contributions to THE QUARTERLY from all quarters, and especially to a department entitled COMMENT which will begin with the next issue. We request your thoughts on THE QUARTERLY and what it might become.

* * *

You will note that with this issue, THE QUARTERLY has been divided into departments. The department entitled THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY, under the editorship of *Lawrence L. Durgin,* has characteristically but appropriately staked out some large claims for itself. There is almost no area of church life on which theology does not rightfully make its claims.

(OVER)

In THE MINISTER AND THE DENOMINATION, under *Richard P. Carter,* an effort will be made to keep us all abreast of the plans and programs of the denomination; the work of the National Commission on the Ministry; and Conference and Association methods and projects which may be of general interest. It is our hope that the pages of this department will help provide us all with a less fragmentary and provincial view of denominational activities.

* * *

In THE MINISTER AND THE PARISH, *Charles L. Copenhaver* promises us articles on preaching, the pastoral opportunities of the minister, his devotional life, parish administration and related subjects.

* * *

In THE MINISTER AND THE WORLD CHURCH, the editor will seek to keep us sensitive to ecumenical trends and thinking.

* * *

From time to time, new departments will be added. Perhaps departments solely concerned with preaching or church music, for example, are called for. It is up to you to determine.

* * *

This issue includes THE QUARTERLY'S annual bid for subscription renewals. You can give us no more genuine encouragement than by renewing your subscription at this time.

W. C. H.

CONCERNING THE CURIOUS BUSINESS OF THINKING

By GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

THE WISEST OF US do not know when this curious business of thinking began to be conscious and purposive thought. Six-sevenths of an iceberg, they say, is under water, and only its white summit shines in the sunlight. Thinking is like that. Its conscious beginnings lie deeper than the subconscious. There must have been a time when instinct and thought began to take their separate courses, but when or how is a debated question. There are levels where thought breaks through. There are certainly some observable elements both of thought and instinct in animals, and we ourselves carry some dim inheritance of instinct, but until thought becomes articulate speech is attended by memory and has words for its tools, its unfoldings are a mystery.

Animals do act as though they thought, but they cannot tell us whether or not they plan and foresee what they do, but there are thought dawns as there are dawns of self-consciousness. Perhaps they are both adumbrations of the same dawn. At any rate, thought builds a world of its own and all our experiences furnish it material which is plastic beneath its creative touch. All else in the domain of experience is inconstant and fleeting. Thought alone belongs to the enduring.

A wise writer has held that thought in its elemental forms is the adaptation of accessible means to ends dimly or clearly foreseen. It is therefore the instrument and condition of our survival. We think something through before it happens and when it happens we are ready for it. Otherwise, it would overwhelm us. Thought has therefore built the many spired and domed structure of life upon the foundations it supplies. "I think," said Des Cartes—"and therefore I am," and one may add, "I think—and therefore I continue to be."

But it all depends. The ends which thought seeks must be sustaining and creative—or else we think ourselves into oblivion. Our contemporaneous civilization faces abysses into which it may fall, which are themselves the creation of trained and disciplined thought, which does not think far enough ahead, which brings us to perhaps the crucial test of thought. It must be far visioned and see the ultimate issues of its processes. We have a phrase for that: "He is," we say, "short sighted"; which needs no amplification. As the French say: "It sees itself."

But "farsighted" thought must itself have standards and controls. We have a covering name for that also. In their entirety, they constitute an "order." When they are right, they constitute a "moral order" which rules by divine right.

A moral order may be confused, self-contradictory and inadequately conceived, but it asserts its authority. The sovereign words of a moral order are "right" and "wrong." Once again they may be inadequately conceived and, in our uses of them, lend their august authority to what by truer tests is not right at all. There are instances enough of that. Nevertheless, something beyond their passing uses shines through them and in their syllables one hears the whisper of a voice bearing authentic tidings. There are lesser tests, of course.

We think also in terms of our vocations. The mathematician thinks in terms of mathematics. A chemist thinks in terms of chemistry, and we all think in terms of conduct. For thought and conduct cannot be divorced save at sore cost to both. Thought is subject to pragmatic tests no matter how abstract and remote it seems.

If thinking is subject to a moral order, if its sovereign words are "ought" and "ought not," then the combined offices of Christian thinking and teaching are plain. They are to establish the Way, the Truth and the Life of Jesus Christ upon the throne rooms of thought and conduct. A field so spacious that its ultimate horizons are beyond our vision but its immediate approaches are nearer than the thresholds we daily cross.

The relation of all this to outstanding aspects of our own time needs here no further development. There is a more than abundant literature upon applied Christianity and most ministerial gatherings include it in some form in their programs. For evidently we are failing. Lord Melbourne who had a gift for telling phrases said that religion is all right till it begins to interfere with individual conduct. We, too, often hold that religion is all right till it begins to interfere with corporate conduct.

THOUGHTFUL CHURCH LEADERS were much concerned in the "first World War" with the relation of war to inherited Christian convictions. A distinguished leader went so far as to say that during a war one must declare a moratorium on Christianity. One does not dare to say that such concerns have entirely faded out of the picture, but they have greatly diminished.

The current concern for "security" makes any critical discussion of our status extremely difficult—even hazardous. One should qualify such statements. There is a widespread and sincere desire for peace and disarmament for which the President is the valiant spokesman — But —

One must not moralize upon the controls of thinking and forget thinking as a joy and resource—and the creative power of it in and upon the thinking person. What we think upon colors the whole of life. St. Paul, instructing his churches, made a list of what things are true and right and beautiful and urged them to think "upon these things." He might have expanded his list almost indefinitely. From the pregnant dust under our feet to the luminous belt of the milky way, there is a universe of things to "think upon" and inquire into with contributing literature beyond cataloging. Literature is the thought deposit of almost countless generations, perfect in form and expression, aspects, as near as may be of the enduring.

Thinking is always colored by emotion. Much of it is emotionally created—and all literature which has power and appeal plays upon the emotions as a harpist plays upon his strings. This is inevitable, but it needs watching. A minister's vocation, like any other, has its opulence and its limitations. But it is beyond any other vocation opulent in the fields it opens for thought. A minister's library proves that. The substance of a lawyer's library is, in the leather-bound books which weigh down his shelves. Everything else is marginal. This is true of a doctor's library—or any specialist in any field of social and political economy. A minister's library has for its corpus the literature of his vocation. But beyond that he has a range as various and inclusive as literature itself. For him the poet sings, the essayist meditates, the dramatist carries the tensions of life to some conclusion of tragedy or comedy. For him the philosopher seeks to see life stately and whole. For him the historian marshals the long procession of soldiers and statesmen, the sinner and the saint. Most preaching is a fabric woven of many strands and nothing the preacher has thought or read is alien to it. No other vocation bears such gifts of material and suggestion. And finally, perhaps, here is the pure pleasure—the word is not adequate—of thinking. It is no conceit to enjoy one's own mind. For that it was given us. It is a resource never to be underestimated, always accessible. It may at times be very humbling. It makes one a good comrade. The interplay of mind with mind is an unfailing joy, and it is not impoverished by the years. They only add their lengthening memories.

There are practical applications of these wondering meditations which bear distinctly upon a minister's vocation. In more ways than the writer has been able to indicate. They are for the most part evident and simple. A minister's life may be so crowded with chores that he does not have time to think. Good thinking needs time to mellow it. James Russell Lowell said of the effect of diplomatic duties upon writing poetry that it was as if a setting hen had to mind the doorbell. Over-driven ministers may say the same thing.

A minister's thought must drain down, so to speak, from vast watersheds—otherwise his preaching becomes channeled, or superficial, or too hastily assembled. Great sermons ripen slowly. The voice of the garnered wisdom of thoughtful meditation. In time they are rooted in experience and to repeat, may become aspects of the enduring. A preacher has many things to be thankful for and most of all that he may say beyond his fellow craftsmen in other vocations—"My mind to me a kingdom is—"

Perhaps this will be read before Thanksgiving. Sermons begin to take final form. We may thank God for many things but very gratefully for the kingdoms of the mind—and we may pray him to give us wisdom constantly to enrich it, administer it wisely, share it with our congregations, and thereby make them fellow citizens of the elect.

Preaching the Gospel is not Enough

STILL AMONG US there are too many that simplify, saying, let the word be preached and social responses are inevitable. But I wonder. When in South Africa two years ago, I was billed to speak in Durban town hall on the Social Implications of the Faith. Up came an old Ulsterman in the vestibule, imploring me that "I must preach the Gospel red hot": and complaining that only one minister was left in Durban preaching the Gospel red hot. "Yes," I said, I hoped to preach the Gospel red hot. I hoped to speak of its social implication. "What do you mean by that?" he snapped, his voice seething with suspicion. "Well," I said, "All men are made in the image of God: all men have stamped upon them, at least in prophecy, the dignity of Christ." "Yes, that is the Gospel," he conceded. "Then what," I asked, "Are you doing about the fourteen thousand Africans and Indians who have no roof over their heads in Durban tonight?" "Them?" he retorted, "I wish the whole damned lot were sunk in the Harbour." I am sorry. The expletive is essential to convey his guilt suppressed. That man had the Gospel; but somehow the social imperative had not won through.

—GEORGE F. MCLEOD
in Union Seminary Quarterly Review

Sermon to Myself

By day I speak the hydra Word of God
That spoken splits in triple-headed flames
To burn the blockhead pews of honest names:
Doctor Judas, Mrs. Good, and Deacon Nod.
They sit, souls folded, as I dare my dare
To set upon their flesh the Three-Faced Beast
Who cuffs straight-backed content to crouched despair,
And strips Man's costumed great to naked least.

At night I trembling lie, dark-wooded in,
While Christ the Child prowls in my brambled heart,
The Dove of Grace harries my hidden sin,
And Six-winged God causes my flesh to start:
For I am Sunday Judas churched in fraud,
Myself am Mrs. Good and Deacon Nod.

Arnold Kenseth

THE MINISTER AND THEOLOGY

Editor: LAWRENCE L. DURGIN
Central Congregational Church
Providence 6, Rhode Island

A STATEMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL PURPOSE

THE THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT of THE MINISTERS' QUARTERLY is based on the conviction that the perennial themes of theological reflection and the recurrent duties and problems of the parish are inseparable. The great thinkers whose influence is still visible in American preaching, for example Augustine, Calvin, Edwards and Bushnell, were men who carried the everyday responsibilities of parish administration. Our own lives as preachers and pastors confirm the lesson these men have taught: theology is neither more nor less than the right arm of the churchman; the churchman is crippled without that arm.

The purpose of this department is to explore some of the particular ways in which churchmanship and theological thinking work together. The premise of this exploration is that we as ministers of Congregational Christian Churches have a special need of talking to each other about our obligations, because each of us is called upon to exercise all those duties which in other communions are frequently allotted to different individuals. We not only have to act as preachers, ministers of the sacraments, pastors and administrators; but we have to be able to justify the method of our actions. The intention of this department is to facilitate a public discussion amongst ourselves to clarify the responsibilities of the parish. Parish ministers as well as ministers of theological education must speak, if we are to profit from this conversation. We are daily confronted by such practical problems as the construction of a worship service or the remodeling of a church, which involve both theological principles and a knowledge of parish strategy. Hardly a year passes, which does not require us to re-examine our theological point of view, our attitude toward social action and our idea of the minister as a churchman, each in the light of the others. In addition, there are other issues: our responsibilities as pastors in our associations and conferences, the relevance of our Congregational intellectual history to present problems of church order, professional ethics, and our need of a more informed understanding of the sister communions, who belong to the Universal Church upon which we are dependent.

All are invited to participate in the conversation on these and related themes, both active and retired ministers, seminary students and laymen, and whoever else is concerned about our education as men and women living in the Church of Christ.

—RICHARD R. NIEBUHR

EDITOR'S NOTES

Contributing to this department of THE QUARTERLY in this issue are *Richard Niebuhr,* lecturer in the Department of Religion at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York; *Arnold Kenseth,* pastor of South Congregational Church, Amherst, Massachusetts, and an important contemporary poet; *Frederick B. Eutsler,* who is teaching at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, where he is also Associate Chaplain; *Browne Barr,* Associate Professor of Preaching and the Parish at the Divinity School, Yale University, in New Haven, Connecticut.

Letters of critical comment on the main articles in this section are invited for publication. They should be sent to the department editor no later than one month after the article appears.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN CONTEMPORARY CONGREGATIONALISM

By FREDERICK B. EUTSLER

THE PERENNIAL MISSION of the church is to preach the gospel of God's revelation and redemption in Jesus Christ; to be the steward of the eternal mysteries of the gospel, of Word and Sacrament. This ministry of Word and Sacrament is the church's very life, and without it there can be no true church. Here the church is fed, nourished, and continually recreated. As Calvin expressed it:

> ". . . everywhere that we see the Word of God purely preached and listened to, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, we must never doubt that there is the church." (*Institutes,* IV, 1, 7, and 9)

This is, indeed, the permanent task and function of the church for which it needs no other contemporary sociological or institutional justification, except, of course, for the very obvious one that the church is itself a society—a community, a company of believers, or a fellowship—which has a corporate and social existence and by being itself both has an effect upon, and is affected by the secular society with which it interacts.

We live in a time of the shaking of the foundations, of what may prove to be in historic perspective, "an age between the ages." In such a time it is not surprising that our Congregational Christian Churches are shaken by internal tensions. The basic questions of theology and polity which we confront are, in microcosm, the questions which perplex the age and the church universal. What these controversies within our own household reveal most significantly, in my judgment, is our desperate need for a more adequate doctrine of the church and community. The extent to which these dissensions give impetus to the formulation of a clarified and purified understanding of the nature of the church to that extent they may have, in the Providence of God, unexpectedly constructive issue.

As already suggested, a doctrine of the church involves sociology as well as theology, order as well as faith, community as well as doctrine, for although a church is more than a sociological grouping, a church cannot be understood apart from its concrete historical and social setting. For a church is not only what it claims to be according to its doctrine, but also what it actually says and does (and does not say and do) in relation to its social environment. In his *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches,* Ernst Troeltsch develops and applies the thesis that the balance between church and society is always the result of two sets of forces: on the one hand, those of theology or theory; on the other those of social life and practice.

The contemporary confusion of Congregationalism about the church is due to the fact that the theory, or theological doctrine of the church, has been separated from its practice—theology from polity, theory from society. New England theology in the seventeenth century had a doctrine of the church which had a sociological counterpart. In brief, it was based on a covenant theology, acknowledging Christ as the Lord of the church, the Bible as the Word of God, and the divine election of the saints as the "gathered church." From the standpoint of polity, the seat of authority, and the rule of law which defined the powers of rulers, supported the principle of civil government by contract. As a result of the controversies of the eighteenth century and the triumph of the views of John Wise, only the sociological basis of the church remains, that of government by contract with men rather than by covenant with God.

The average member of a Congregational Church (if such there be) when asked today about his understanding of the distinctive Congregational idea of the church, usually replies that it is the idea of "spiritual democracy," or "freedom of belief," or "the autonomy of the local church." Democracy as a political theory has replaced any distinctive theological conception of the church. "The Lordship of Christ," tends to be a pious phrase because it is not rationally explained in terms of a confession of faith; the critical studies of the Bible have tended to relegate it to a secondary role so that it is no longer the objective norm of faith and practice; the covenant theology has been largely neglected or has become an empty form; all that remains of this view of the church is its sociological basis—democracy. "I am a Congregationalist; nobody can tell me what to believe. I am a Congregationalist; nobody else can speak for me." These two statements summarize for many in our fellowship their understanding of the Congregational view of the church and this kind of individualism and atomism is the fundamental source of our present difficulties.

WHY IS THIS an inadequate view of the church? Because the necessity of the church must be rooted in the nature of the gospel the church proclaims; that is to say, it must be a theological and not merely a sociological necessity. While one of the consequences of this individualism and atomism is to regard the church as just another association among many (how often civic clubs and churches are bracketed together with the intimation that as voluntary associations they are essentially the same), but the fact remains that the church is not just *any sort of association* or religious society, but has a specific function and structure. Whereas sociology grounds the church in human nature, theology grounds it in divine grace. The sociologists are right when they say that some form of religious society is sociologically inevitable, but they do not understand the "form" of this society when they regard it as merely another association and have nothing relevant to say about it.

The church is a theological necessity because there can be no genuine faith in Christ which is not at the same time faith in the church which is His body. The church is not simply the aggregate of saved souls (a "gathered church"), nor a social organism. The church exists in a supernatural dimension; that is to say, the church is constituted by the conformity of its faith-structure to the gospel it proclaims.

Consider the main themes of Christian doctrine which the church in all centuries has confessed and striven to articulate. The church is the continuation or the extension (although these terms are not without difficulty) or, if you prefer, "the human response," "the answer of the Church's faith," in the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection.

The Incarnation means that God came into history in Christ in whom He has decisively disclosed His nature and His will, has visited and redeemed his people, has created a new humanity, and has won from forgiven sinners a true repentance and a glad obedience. Since the Christian Church is grounded in the Incarnation, like the Word it, too, must become flesh in obedience to God's will for a fellowship of faith. Since the center of history is Christ, the church is the bearer of the central meaning and reality of history. As such it has a corporate, institutional existence and as a corporate entity the church may at times become demonic. The corporate church, therefore, is never its own primary standard; it must be organically related to and interact with the church catholic, but the fellowship of believers within the institution is the work of the Holy Spirit, therefore every Christian is responsible not only for the fellowship as such but also for the institution.

The Atonement is God's supreme sacrifice through Christ, in whom the full nature of God first fully suffered in history, because what God is and wills was now first fully understood and accepted by a human being in order to make all human fellowships in God's long last conform to the kind he has prepared for us. This doctrine is not exclusive, but inclusive. It gathers into itself as the supreme symbol and fact, all God's suffering for sinful men throughout all the ages. The church, too, to follow its Lord, must take up its cross, for a church that fails to suffer for and with the world has stopped being Christian. The cross is the center of history. It is the chief means whereby God effects the fellowship of forgiveness, of faith, of grace, of the fruits of the Spirit, of joy, of peace, and of eternal victory.

THE CHURCH IS also the continuation of the Resurrection. It is a revelation in history through a definite communion of the breaking of the power of the law, of sin, of darkness, and of death. That is the central meaning of the Resurrection. Christ is risen because he has triumphed forever over man's chief enemies: the law which we never could fulfill completely, for we are saved through faith and grace; sin, for the cross has freed us from our tomb of guilt; darkness, for the eternal mystery of life has been changed from the fear of the unknown to the warm light of God which is in Christ Jesus; death, "for neither death nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Because the structure of the church's life of worship and witness as well as the content of its proclamation is the result of its conformity to these major themes of its gospel—Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection—of which the church is the historic extension and continuation, in a very primary sense it is also true that outside the church there is no salvation. No man can be saved by himself; we are saved in, into, and for Christian fellowship. There can be no individual Christians, no isolationist sons of God; we are sons, brethren, members of a common family.

Historic Congregationalism has conceived of the church as the company of believers who confess the Lordship of the Incarnate, Atoning and Risen Christ. This theological basis for the church was not created by Congregationalism, but is the doctrine which has created not only Congregationalism but all Christian communions which acknowledge Christ as the Lord and Head of the church. This theological doctrine also created Congregational polity—the structure of its corporate faith—but the polity is not on the same level or in the same dimension as the faith, but is derivative from it. The fathers of Congregationalism were concerned not merely to establish the autonomy but the catholicity of the local congregation.

In a recent article, Truman Douglass emphasizes the point that Congregationalists do not claim for the church any distinctive or unique feature save that of being truly the church catholic. To quote:

> ". . . when we Congregational Christians attempt to describe ourselves, we do not begin with those things which we regard as distinctive or unique. We are first of all members of the church and we do not intend to be any less members of the Holy Catholic Church than the most vociferous high churchmen among our neighbors. Our Congregational fathers did not set out to regather the church in purity and simplicity for the purpose of doing away with the church nor in order to be less a church than they had been in the Established church. They did it because they wanted to make manifest the true nature of the Christian fellowship in all its fullness and livingness." (Truman B. Douglass, *The Marks of a Living Church,* "Advance," January 11, 1954, p. 14)

And this true nature of the Christian fellowship they believed is constituted by the fact that a local congregation of believers is not *a* church, but *the* church—the one Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ. It is to the local, particular church that all the promises, gifts and powers of the church really belong; the particular church in any place is the universal church in that place. Because all power, authority and discipline are vested in the local church the local church must be autonomous.

This view of polity is not based on expediency but on an interpretation of the New Testament, and however much this interpretation may be criticized, it represents an honest attempt to answer the question, "What kind of ordering of church life does the gospel demand?" In its origin the autonomy of the local church was never conceived as a product of human ingenuity and reason or a desirable organization of the church's life by a wise and sound political principle, but rather as obedience to the gospel. The church must be autonomous because only thus can it be truly catholic.

WHY SHOULD THE church be catholic? Because there is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism; because only once has God visited and redeemed his people. But the church as we know it is divided and in schism. Where then is the catholic church? The catholic church is prior to the particular church, as the particular church is prior to the individual member. It is more than an association, or council or synod of churches; it is something which conditions the very being of particular churches. Since Christ must rule in each local church, therefore the local church must be autonomous lest council or synod usurp the power and authority of Christ.

But this catholicity of the local church whereby it exercises the powers of the whole church does not and cannot end with the local church, but must also find expression in dependence upon and relationship to all the churches, to the whole Body of Christ. I agree with Douglas Horton that a church council is like a local congregation with respect to its catholicity and therefore its autonomy. To make the autonomy of the local church the *absolute* value in Congregational polity is to be false to the catholicity of Congregationalism and to deny its gospel basis. A truncated Congregationalism which cannot see beyond the autonomy of the particular church is not a possible catholic system.

Some contemporary Congregationalists appear to have come to regard the autonomy of the local church as an end in itself apart from any theological undergirding in the nature of the church. This is the extreme of atomism and isolationism and the logical consequence of such a view is to dissolve all our Congregational structures—the General Council, the State Conferences, the Associations and all other subsidiary bodies and instrumentalities, for these inevitably condition and limit the absolute autonomy of the local church. There is no basis in this view either for "Our Christian World Mission," or for any kind of order for the ecumenical movement or for a world-wide church, for if the church is to be conceived as consisting simply of isolated units there is no real means of communion. An autonomy which is not for the sake of catholicity is false to the gospel as well as the traditional Congregational doctrine of the nature of the church.

Similarly, with respect to the church and community. As suggested earlier, one of the consequences of Christ's Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection is the founding of a new humanity, a new Israel of God, consisting of the whole community. The Christian Church is, therefore, a community; it is the Kingdom of God on earth in the sense that it is a fellowship of those who have accepted God's sovereign rule over all history. This is the foundation of the ethical responsibility of the church for society. It is no "social gospel" which demands the primary loyalty of the Christian, but the gospel itself is social throughout. A

church is not an isolated unit, so a Christian is not an isolated, atomistic self. The Christian gospel is not that of man in his solitariness but of man in all his concrete relatedness; in his moment by moment responses to the Lordship of Christ in every situation of his existence whether individual or communal, personal or social. Admittedly, it is not easy to decide what may be a Christian response to complex issues of public policy. There can be none in any absolute or unqualified sense of the term "Christian." All our apprehensions and responses are relative, sinful, and ambiguous. But the important thing is that we must try to respond as Christians, confessionally, in terms of our faith, and not merely in terms of our biases or subjective preferences.

In recent years the Council for Social Action has been criticized for its "political bias." But the critics of the Council also show bias, politically. Whereas the Council has tried to make clear the confessional basis for its position in terms of theology, its critics, so far as I can judge, simply express their own bias without theological undergirding.

To RECOVER the meaning of the Church for Congregationalism we must also recover its gospel basis in the sovereignty of God and the Lordship of Christ. This means that the church must be made up of laymen who seek to understand what the mind of Christ requires both for the church in its corporate acts and institutional relationships, and for themselves in terms of their own faith response to the personal and social decisions of contemporary life. To aid in seeking thus to know the mind of Christ and to respond to His Lordship are the resources of the Bible, Christian history, worship, study and mutually corrective discussion, but again it must be emphasized that all our apprehensions are finite and relative. Differences and disagreements among church members are thus bound to arise and when they do it does not mean that the bonds of Christian fellowship must be broken. The basis of all positions, then, is confessional—the expression of the church's understanding of others may be different and that the mind of Christ transcends and judges all our relative apprehensions. The polity, the order of the church, its institutional structures and forms must be derived from faith in Christ's Lordship and must express the church's common faith and witness.

This undoubtedly means that polity will vary from church to church and situation to situation. Where there is consensus about the essentials of the faith itself it is neither necessary nor possible to achieve unanimous consensus in order for the church to speak on specific issues. The mind of Christ is not a matter of counting heads; for Christ is the Lord of the majority no less than the minority, and His mind may be different from both.

Some of the fog which enshrouds polity issues in Congregationalism may begin to clear if all parties to controversy will begin not by defending their own subjective judgments and personal preferences, but by asking what the Lordship of Christ requires of our churches and of ourselves as members of the new humanity.

No ONE MAN can be an eloquent preacher, an expert organizer, an assiduous parish priest, a psychological expert giving learned counsel, a "good mixer," who goes out and plays ball with the boys and leads the Boy Scouts on hikes—yet that is just what is expected of the parish minister.

—WALTER SAMUEL SWISHER
The Quarterly, Vol. I, No. 4

EXPOSITORY PREACHING

By BROWNE BARR

DURING A recent General Council Meeting a group of ministers gathered after one of the evening sessions for an informal discussion of their work. Problems associated with preaching eventually came into the discussion and one of the men said a good word for the expository sermon. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, who was present, looked surprised and asked, "But what other kind of preaching is there?" If preaching is to be a means of grace in the Church, if the Word of the Living God is to be heard in the imperfect stammering words of the parish preacher, if something marvelous and good in the sight of God is to happen both to preacher and congregation because of the sermon, it is doubtful if the preacher can safely abandon expository preaching.

It is not easy to discover or frame an adequate definition of expository preaching. For some, the difference between a textual sermon and an expository sermon lies in the length of the text. For others no sermon could be properly called an expository sermon if it began with a "life-situation" problem. Thus many ministers have given up what they considered expository sermons because they felt hemmed in by the fancied requirements of that type of preaching. Quite the opposite is actually true. Expository preaching opens up new areas of concern, it leads the willing follower along into new and exciting paths, its effect on the minister as he works, and on the congregation as they worship, is one of liberation not restriction. For the expository sermon finds its grounding and its flowering in the Bible and taps the inexhaustible riches of these written human words from Genesis to Revelation where, as in no other place, God's Word for us in Jesus Christ is heard.

A sermon is an expository sermon if it arises directly out of the Bible and if the minister seeks through it to set forth honestly and clearly the meaning and purpose of the passage. The length of the passage is incidental. The passage may be extended or brief, it may be one word, one phrase, one verse or even an entire book or section. The Letter to the Ephesians, for example, provides a superb opportunity, background, setting, for a single expository sermon or for hundreds of them.

The requirements and disciplines for sound expository preaching are heavy. The preacher must spend hours with the Bible. For the man resolved to preach expository sermons there will be no more writing of a pretty little essay on psychology or theology or current affairs and then desperately leafing through the Bible or a topical concordance for some suitable text to tack on at the beginning! The expository sermon begins with the text and the preacher is guided by the Bible. This means that he must continue and grow as a Bible scholar. The best commentaries will become his best friends and he will find that the exegetical sections of the INTERPRETER'S BIBLE are of more value to him than the lower part of the page with its exposition. He will even discover in time, perhaps, that other men's exposition hinders him, cramps his own creative imagination. He may even be tempted in middle age to take up the serious study or review of Biblical Greek so he does not have to rely always and only on other men's training.

Expository preaching begins always in the Bible. Perhaps it has been put aside by so many preachers in our time because they did not understand that it must not end there. The danger of Bibliolatry is obvious but scarcely great among Congregationalists. The greater danger is in the failure to consider the relevance of the experience and wisdom of the Church through the centuries to the Biblical testimony and to draw them both together in terms which are compellingly vivid and relevant to the everyday experience of the

congregation. Many preachers who have abandoned expository preaching did so in the sensible recognition of the pressing needs of their congregations. If expository preaching means a retreat from reality into ancient and irrelevant folklore, then it ought to be abandoned. What it can mean and should mean is quite the opposite. To be a competent Bible scholar does not assure competent expository preaching. But the competent Bible scholar who is also a humble and sensitive person and deeply involved in the passions of his time and the problems of his people is equipped to preach with an effectiveness prompted of the Holy Spirit. His sermons will be expository and the Word of God which is conveyed through them will judge and redeem him as well as his congregation.

THERE ARE PRACTICAL advantages to expository preaching which must not be overlooked. In such preaching there is an authority which does not arise out of the preacher's wisdom or piety. It is not the authority of proof-texting or any other perversion of the Scriptures, but an authority which arises out of truth. The idea of preaching is fulfilled in an expository sermon where the minister allows truth to speak for itself. The unwary preacher may, to his surprise, find the Bible leading him where he would not dare venture alone and compelling him to say what he would otherwise lack the courage to say. An exposition of the third chapter of Amos, for example, once led the minister of a wealthy congregation to a sort of boldness he usually lacked. Many members of this particular congregation were the sort who would be described in the society column with a dual address. You know, Mr. and Mrs. John Doe of Palm Springs and Bar Harbor. The preacher could not honestly avoid the fifteenth verse of the chapter which reads, "And I will smite the winter house with the summer house . . ." Whether any good came of it or not I do not know, but it serves to illustrate how expository preaching can possess an authority which is independent of the preacher. Of course, if the Bible is searched for passages of this sort by the minister who is afraid to form his own words, then both the Bible and the pulpit are profaned.

Another practical advantage of expository preaching is the surprising manner in which it lifts many a preacher out of preaching ruts. A minister determined one year to preach a series of expository sermons from the Gospel of Luke during Lent. He was much surprised to find that the first sermon did not turn out to be one on the boyhood of Jesus, as he had imagined. Study and reflection on the early passages of Luke led him inescapably to a sermon on "Expectancy." Before the study of that Gospel was finished, he further discovered that he could not be true to the words recorded there and not preach a sermon on prayer. He checked his records and discovered to his dismay that it had been fourteen months since that subject had been mentioned more than in passing in a sermon. Can this be the work of the Holy Spirit? Certainly that congregation was grateful for the gift of expository preaching. They discovered that it also protected them against the personal eccentricities of their minister even as the Book of Common Prayer protects an Anglican congregation from the inadequacies of their clergy.

A further practical and important advantage of expository preaching is the manner in which it inevitably increased knowledge of the Scriptures among the people. It is interesting to note that expository preaching has declined in the United States with rise of the Church School. The Church School has failed to give new generations a comprehensive Biblical background. Expository preaching is thus more difficult in our era, but all the more essential if knowledge of the Bible is valuable for Christian people. The minister who wants to have a wonderful new experience with his congregation should invite them to re-establish

the custom of bringing their Bibles to the morning service. A few churches have recently purchased Bibles to stand in the racks with the hymnals. In any event, it is an exciting experience both for preacher and congregation to follow the text not only as the Lessons are read but as the sermon is preached. The minister cannot assume any wide knowledge of the Scriptures among his people in the so-called "liberal" churches. Neither do I believe that he can assume that he has no responsibility to remedy this lack.

THIS BRINGS US directly to the gravest danger in expository preaching and to its primary difficulty. Many people assume that an expository sermon is one which dwells verse by verse with some passage of Scripture. If there are fourteen verses in the passage under consideration then there are fourteen sections or points to the sermon. The preacher rides one verse until it is dead and then, in desperation, flees to the next verse. The result of this sort of pulpit performance is to kill both the Scripture and the people. Such procedure is not preaching. At best it is an exegetical exercise! Actually this is the gravest practical danger in expository preaching that the sermon ceases to be a sermon and becomes an exegetical exercise.

An expository sermon, as many competent writers on the subject take pains to emphasize, must still be a sermon. That is it must have the qualities of a sermon. Here I am not referring to that intangible dimension which differentiates a sermon from an oration, but to the practical matter of sermon construction. The three classical marks of any good sermon are unity, theme and structure! The minister who broods over a passage of Scripture in the effort to prepare an expository sermon must search for these three qualities. The simple outward paragraph markings in contemporary translations of the Bible are of first assistance in discovering unity. They are not always accurate and there may well be an integral unity which overlaps outward punctuation, but they offer some guidance. The obvious unity of the parables is usually a true unity. The most superficial examination of the twenty-third Psalm, for another example, reveals that it possesses two major divisions. In any event, the expository sermon like every other sermon must have unity, but in expository preaching the unity springs from the passage and is not superimposed upon it.

The unity of a passage is often ascertained by the theme of the passage. In any event, theme, too, must be clear. F. B. Meyer in his book on expository preaching urges the discovery of a kernel or pivotal verse: one verse in the passage which expresses the theme. Such a verse underlined and emphasized and worked into the fabric of a sermon may serve as a "text" within the larger "text." The final requirement of structure, like theme, must spring from the passage, but this does not mean that the structure of the sermon is parallel to the structure of the passage. The number of words or their arrangement do not indicate their value. It is altogether possible that a passage of ten verses provides the basis for a sermon with two central divisions. It might well be that the last nine verses prompt the first division and the first verse supports the second. The structure of the sermon springs from the meaning of the passage not from its arrangement.

It is thought in some quarters that a critical study of the Bible destroys the foundation for expository preaching. If it does, then that foundation is altogether too frail and it is well destroyed. On the other hand if the critical study of the Bible opens for us, as it should, the fundamental and abiding nature of the Bible and its place in the household of faith and in the lives of the faithful, then there is scant excuse for any minister to refuse to marshall all his resources for constant and sound expository preaching. The response of most contemporary congregations to lively expository preaching confirms the oft-quoted Congregational theme that God hath yet more light to bring forth from His Holy Word.

THE MINISTER AND THE DENOMINATION

Editor: RICHARD P. CARTER
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THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

ONE OF THE HAPPIEST projects sponsored by the Commission on the Ministry during the 1954-56 biennium has been the organization of a Congregational Christian Committee on Theological Education. On September 14-15, 1955, the representatives of nine of the principal Theological Schools in which our ministers are educated met in New York City at the call of the Commission on the Ministry.

Chairman Gerald G. Parker placed before the seminary faculty and administration representatives present the basic interests and concerns which caused the Commission on the Ministry to call the meeting. There was an immediate general response of approval of the calling of the meeting, as well as immediate suggestions as to some of the felt needs of Seminary representatives for a strengthening of relationship, of understanding and cooperation between seminaries, churches, and the denominational Boards and Councils.

Following a presentation by Daniel Williams (Union) of the general interests and findings of the recent national study of Theological Education in the United States, in which many of the already expressed interests of the Commission on the Ministry and our seminary representatives were underscored, a committee was appointed from among the representatives present to draw up a statement of a possible form of organization.

The next morning the Committee submitted its report and after careful consideration the following statement of organization was adopted:

Name

Congregational Christian Committee on Theological Education

Objectives

1. To provide an agency which will symbolize the denomination's concern for the education of men and women for the ministry.
2. To engage in common study to improve theological education in the member institutions.
3. To interpret theological education to the people of our churches, our ministers and our denominational boards and agencies.
4. To provide the Congregational Christian Churches with an organization which will cooperate with denominational and interdenominational organizations concerned with or engaged in theological education.
5. To call to the attention of the denomination the resources available in theological seminaries for research, writing and teaching.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Rev. Fred S. Buschmeyer, who reports for the denomination in the articles in this section, needs no introduction to the ministers of our fellowship. Until his recent appointment as acting minister and executive secretary of the General Council, he has served as associate minister of the Council and director of the Department of the Ministry. In that capacity, he has labored zealously to sustain and elevate not only ministerial standards but standards of Congregational Churchmanship in general, and with laudable effect. From time to time, he and others serving our fellowship in official capacities will be invited to contribute to this departmemnt of THE QUARTERLY.

Qualifications for Membership

Membership is open to theological schools which:

1. are Congregational in origin; or
2. have had Congregational cooperative affiliation; or
3. usually graduate five or more Congregational Christian candidates for the ministry each year; or
4. usually has two or more Congregational Christian ministers on the faculty, and
5. shall provide for its students the opportunity for gaining adequate understanding of Congregational Christian history, polity, and procedures.

Organization

The membership shall consist of one representative from each institution qualifying for membership. If an institution desires to have a second representative at the meetings of the Committee it may do so, providing that it pays the expenses of its second representative, who shall be without vote.

The officers shall be a chairman, a secretary, and an executive committee, consisting of the chairman and secretary plus one other member, together with the Director of the Department of the Ministry ex officio.

Meetings

Meetings shall be held: annually at the time of the Mid-winter Meetings of the Missions Council; biennially at the time of the General Council Meetings, in alternate years at time and place to be determined; and/or at such other times and places as the Executive Committee shall determine.

Roy Pearson (Andover-Newton), Fred Whittaker (Bangor) and Cushman McGiffert (Chicago) were elected as a committee to prepare an agenda for the next meeting of the C.O.T.E. to be held in conjunction with the Mid-winter meetings of the Missions Council at Buck Hill Falls, January 28-29, 1956.

It is expected that at least twelve Theological Schools will send representatives to this Committee which has a wide field of opportunity for service before it in carrying out its already stated objectives.

THE THEOLOGICAL COMMITTEE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

THE CURRENT EMPHASIS would certainly seem to be upon theology! On September 16, 1955, Shelton Smith of Durham, North Carolina; Walter Marshall Horton of Oberlin, Ohio; and E. Jerome Johanson of Avon, Connecticut, met in New York City to recommend the way in which our denomination could make a representative reaction to theological study documents and pronouncements issued by the National or World Councils of Churches.

Two specific documents are now before this Committee for study: (a) The Lund Report of 1952; and (b) The Evanston Reports of the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. It was the decision of the Committee that in writing its report it would seek from representative denominational organizations comments on those sections of the theological documents which touch upon the special interests of the particular organization, board or council. Additional comments will be sought from at least a sampling of recognized theologians of our denomination.

When all solicited comments have been received, the Committee will write its report and submit it to the Executive Committee of the General Council for amendment

or approval and transmission to the Council issuing the particular theological study or statement.

It is interesting and encouraging to know that methods are being devised whereby denominational reactions to ecumenical studies and pronouncements can be made articulate.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES ON THE MINISTRY AND FIRST-YEAR SEMINARY STUDENTS

Last Spring the Department of the Ministry sought the cooperation of the Conference Committees on the Ministry in those Conferences in which there is located one or more of the Theological Seminaries in which a considerable number of Congregational Christian young men and women are enrolled.

The suggestion was that the Conference Committee on the Ministry give a dinner for the first-year Congregational Christian seminary students to express the interest and concern of our ministers and churches in these students, to present them with a book of Congregational Christian Churchmanship materials at the beginning of their professional course of study, and to establish a definite liaison between the Congregational Christian members of the seminary faculty, the Conference Committee on the Ministry, and the first-year students.

As of the present date (mid-October), I can report on only one such meeting, though I hope most sincerely that others were or will be held. On the evening of October 7, the Connecticut Conference Committee on the Ministry played host to the first-year Congregational Christian seminary students of Hartford and Yale, at the new Conference headquarters in Hartford.

There were between thirty-five and forty students present, and they were a fine looking group representing every section of the United States. The Conference Superintendent, James F. English, and the Chairman of the Conference Committee on the Ministry, James Potter, did the honors in welcoming the students, expressing the interest of the local churches and ministers in them, and in making the students aware of the facilities and personnel of the Conference which were at their command during their seminary course of study.

The Director of the Department of the Ministry was given the opportunity to present to the students the loose-leaf notebook of Congregational Christian Churchmanship Materials gathered and made available by the Department of the Ministry. The response of the students was one of sincere gratitude for the concrete expression of the churchmanship concerns and methods of our denomination. It is the conviction of the Commission on the Ministry that such personal initiation into the churchmanship spirit and practices of our denomination, for both seminary students and ministers of other denominations transferring their standing into all of our Associations, is essential to the creation and continuance of an informed and effective ministry for our churches.

Editor: CHARLES LEONARD COPENHAVER
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THE RETURN OF THE MAYFLOWER

By CARADOC JAMES MORGAN

MUCH HAS BEEN written and said of the coming of the Pilgrims to the North American continent. Before their arrival American history, very largely, was a period of discovery and exploration, which had definite commercial characteristics. But a distinct, upward trend is evidenced in the record of colonization and civilization which was the direct result of the advent of the Pilgrims. But in our appreciation for so significant a heritage, it is possible for us to give this divine event in human affairs more meaning when we recall the seemingly unrecognized fact of the return of the Mayflower to England after its first winter in Plymouth Harbor, and the associations connected with that return.

A Romantic Story

The story is both realistic and romantic. According to Ames, "The Mayflower and Her Log," the Mayflower dropped anchor some distance from the shore December 26th, 1620, and lay there until Thursday, April 5th, the following spring. Both history and poetry have been used to record and recall the poignant memories of those days of our infant nation. But whatever the historian has to say of this heart-throbbing epic in our national life, it is the poet who rises to the great heights of human descriptiveness and intense reality in a language and meaning which the heart can feel, and the mind understand:

"Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea,
And the sounding aisles of the dim
woods rang
To the anthem of the free."

Those original settlers did not move so far inland that they were completely out of sight of the sea upon which they had suffered so much, but which they loved none the less. Throughout that first unforgettable winter they could see the ship that would sail back to the Homeland in the spring-time. While there were many interests to claim their time and attention, one ventures to say that the ship was rarely out of their sight, and the thought of its approaching departure must have been constantly in their minds. The sufferings and hardships of that first winter are best felt rather than expressed. Suffice it to say that practically half of the original colony died. There is nothing like death in a strange land to turn one's thoughts to the old home. As they lost their loved ones, nothing could be more human and natural as at least to think of the opportunity which would be theirs to return to England with the next sailing of the Mayflower. They were not fugitives who had fled from justice. They had committed no crime for which they

EDITOR'S NOTES

As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, *Caradoc James Morgan,* minister to the Port Chicago, California, Community Congregational Church, serves up a salient reminder of how far-reaching and precious our Pilgrim heritage is. From the other side of the continent, *Robert L. Eddy,* minister of the United Congregational Church, Little Compton, Rhode Island, gives thanks for the rural parish. Mr. Eddy is known to many of us through his delightful book, MINISTER'S MONDAY. From *Graham R. Hodges,* minister to the Congregational Churches of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, comes a first class exhortation to deliver our sermons First Class; and from *J. Ellsworth Kalas* some reflections on the conflicting demands on ministerial time.

were afraid to face the consequences. Old England was as dear to them as New England. Many hallowed associations lingered with them, and as long as the Mayflower remained within the reach of their vision, they were too human to completely forget its approaching return.

The Pilgrim's Heart

The historian describes their first winter as a period of settlement which involved the building of homes and the finding of food for those who were strong enough to survive the many hardships. This is a recognized fact. But it is the poet who has the insight and genius for interpreting their innermost thoughts and feelings during that period of longing and loneliness. Longfellow, in "The Courtship of Miles Standish," opens up for us a pathway which leads into the precincts of the Pilgrim's heart, and where we see a display of those emotions which come to the surface in every period of settlement in new lands.

"Then they sat down and talked of the birds and the beautiful spring-time,
Talked of their friends at home, and the Mayflower that sailed on the morrow.
I have been thinking all day, said, gently the Puritan maiden,
Dreaming all night, and thinking all day, of the hedge-rows of England.
You say it is wrong, but I cannot help it; I almost
Wish myself back in Old England, I feel so lonely and wretched."

We see the humanity of the Pilgrim at its best not through the eye of the historian alone, who seems content to make him a builder and a colonist. True, there was his home to build; work to be done to provide the necessities of life, and share in the defense of their common property. But it is the poet again who touches the responsive chord in our lives as we see him take the Pilgrim beyond the thought of food and shelter to memories of the past which were as precious as the promises of the future. The length of that first winter cannot be measured by days and weeks and months alone. It had been too great a drama to think of it in terms of time. But however severe the winter had been to the Pilgrims, the long expected spring-time came with warm sunshine and fevered anticipations. The Mayflower was scheduled to return with the out-going tide Thursday, April 5th, 1621. To return with it would mean freedom from the hardships of another winter, which they knew would be inevitable in its coming. But it meant far more than that. It meant reconciliation with loved ones; companionship with friends; back to familiar scenes. The stoutest heart among them, on that eventful Thursday, must have felt a tug at the heart-strings when he thought of the immediate return of the Mayflower.

That morning arrived for them to make their choice. And what an occasion it must have been!

"Then from their houses in haste came forth the Pilgrims of Plymouth;
Men and women and children, all hurrying down the sea-shore,
Eager, with tearful eyes, to say farewell to the Mayflower,
Homeward bound o'er the sea, and leaving them here in the desert.
Meanwhile the Master alert, but with dignified air and important,

Saying a few last words, and enforcing his careful remembrance.
Then taking each by the hand, as if he were grasping a tiller,
Into the boat he sprang, and in haste shoved off to the vessel.

Lost in the sound of the oars was the last farewell of the Pilgrims.
O strong hearts and true! not one went back in the Mayflower!
No, not one looked back, who had set his hand to the plowing!"

An Epochal Decision

Not one went back in the Mayflower! In the light of what American history was before the coming of the Pilgrims, and what it is today because of their coming, this decision not to return marks a memorable epoch in our national life. Many reasons might be offered why "Not one went back on the Mayflower." Foremost, to those first settlers it was not a question of choice, but conscience. To us, today, for convenience sake, it is easy to substitute choice for conscience. But when those heroes heard the stern voice of conscience speak to them, there was no other alternative but to obey and stay. Unlike other colonists who had come before them, these were a distinct group who had come to the New World with the abiding hope that here they could find the religious freedom which had been denied them in the Motherland. Others had come armed with credentials and protected with royal charters which assured them economic security and invested rights. But here was a group of people who had made a great adventure, out of which they dreamed and hoped would come a self-perpetuating form of government which would assure the individual the maximum amount of religious freedom, and the liberty to make his own laws.

Children of Their Age

Some may raise the question regarding the wisdom of the Pilgrims for leaving England in the first place. That they should have remained there to fight and finish the battle for religious freedom. At home such a problem was pressing and immediate, and that a decision on their part to remain to fight that battle would be as equally heroic as their Western adventure. There is a certain amount of logic in this reasoning. But our thoughts are not their thoughts, though we hold to the same truth. They were children of their own age. Simple in their orthodoxies, yet strong in their faith; nonviolent in their attitudes, but jealous of their cause, here was a people who unquestionably believed that they were being led by the hand of Providence. The very fact that they were opposed by civil authority was to them undisputable evidence that their primal duty was not to fight such authority, but that it was God's will that they should leave all that was near and dear to them as a part of the price of their obedience to that will.

Their System Vindicated

This decision not to return in the Mayflower laid the foundation, and gave direction to the creation of a democratic state and people whose heritage is unequalled by other nations. The governmental system advocated by the Pilgrims is being tested to the breaking point today. But it has vindicated itself in the great crises of life by its supreme values, and will successfully meet present onslaughts, and hopefully survive the future as long as it holds true to the Pilgrim ideal. This ideal is the free worship of man with his Creator, without dictatorial patterns whatsoever. It is the liberty to be free in a land where every individual, regardless of birth or creed, shall have equal opportunity with his fellowman. It is the dream waiting for the practical fulfillment where the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God, as the waters cover the sea. In iron silence the Pilgrim suffered and struggled to give to mankind this immortal heritage. It was the greatest ideal he could live for; it was the most precious dream he willingly died for..

"O strong hearts and true! not one
went back in the Mayflower."

THE TAP-ROOT OF PRAYER is thankfulness. Count me over the men and women who have wrought changes through prayer and they have been thankful people.

The Quarterly, Vol. III, No. 2

NO BUS TO MY TOWN

By ROBERT L. EDDY

IT IS HARD TO WRITE about life in the country because its charms are so evident. And they have been written about so often, and so many times with a sodden sentimentality, that it takes some courage to try again. As one hymns the country life one's ears are deafened by earlier praises ranging from Thoreau to the Twenty-third Psalm. Meanwhile, the disadvantages of country life as a permanent thing are so clear that they mock most enthusiasms for field and stream. Yet it seems justifiable from time to time to point out the solid, bright side of life in the country, specifically here a parish ministry in the country, even though it be largely repetition. To strive to state an old truth, without cant or blindness or falsely based raptures seems a worthy effort. As a tribute to the country parish, and in gratitude for it these lines are offered. The fact that these sentiments are *still true* has the faint but real aspect of news, not unlike the unvarying hourly proclamations of the old town crier, giving the time and assuring that "All-I's well!"

To begin with, then, there is no bus to my town. No train or boat, either, and of course, no airfield. Getting to Little Compton is a triumph over the limitations of modern public transportation. We must tell you from what you may mistakenly call our "outside world" when giving you directions for arriving here the story of the Vermont farmer who "helped" a lost New Yorker find an elusive Vermont town with the words, "You can't get there from here." We are on a peninsula, eighty per cent surrounded by water, bounded northerly by another small town and, for the rest, in the words of Rachel Carson, have "the sea around us." We have no industries of any size, and the many people who visit here, like the residents, get in and out easily in their own cars. My ministry, which began in a city well served by a railroad and two large bus lines, went on to a parish with two bus lines making only six trips a day to other towns. Then it went on to a larger and better parish with a bus line making only two trips a day to one city and thus it comes to its fairest fields so far as a professional position is concerned in this comparatively remote little location with no public vehicles at all.

I have sacrificed the restraining taste which would silence the autobiographical urge here because I believe that other men have in all ages known something of the same sort of paradoxical progression. And as often as they are warned against it there will still be young men who sigh for life in the city, and imagine that there in all senses of the word is life indeed. For them, it is worth saying, as it is worth saying to other men serving the country churches of our fellowship, that the old truths are still true; the good things of life are where you find them, and the yearbook, for all its uses, avails us little in pointing out just where we would be useful and happy.

No doubt far more men would be interested in the country life in the ministry if they knew they could make a living there. But there are now posts in the field (and I do mean field) where you *can* make a living. The country churches are taking seriously the dictum of Jesus and Paul (one of only two such) that the laborer is worthy of his hire. Here they have consolidated or federated, there they have re-thought what they must do to support a man who will serve them for longer than one trip of the earth around the sun. Summer visitors who have been imbibing religion anew in the cities in the last ten years have been enabled by higher incomes to lengthen their annual stays

in the neighborhood of country churches, and have no necessarily snobbish view of the country church. An increasing wave of men retiring to the country who used to hole up in the city is proving a great blessing to country churches where the newcomers can come in and help out without trying to impose city ways upon the country. With the great shortening of distances between town and city created by highways and television, many country towns are as close to city centers now as these centers' outskirts were thirty years ago. That growing genus, the commuter, seeks farther and farther for untrammelled nests, and this too has swelled some of our formerly somewhat seedy little towns with a new vitality. There are men in our town who may sell their wares in Newport, Providence, Fall River, or New Bedford and never be more than an hour's drive from their permanent seaside home where they can get under the still dews of quietness and let all their strivings cease. All these factors in the changing character of some of our American towns is substance to the claim that a country pastor need not be "passing rich on fifty pounds a year" or anything of the kind,—not anymore, not everywhere.

ANOTHER OBJECTION to ministering to country people has been the feeling that they are too little inclined to be interested in what the minister has to give, or that there are too few people anyway. To the first part of this objection we concede a conditional sort of agreement; nothing is more tragic, perhaps, than a minister whose people just do not want what he has to give, and make it clear by their resistance and absence. It will be better in the day of judgment for Sodom and Gomorrah than for such. But this solid insulation against the Spirit is not confined to the country, and led G. A. Studdert-Kennedy to note that when Jesus came to Birmingham, he "crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary." But the fewness of people in a church, any number in and of itself, is, we may hope, no sign of necessary plunge into despair. How long it is before some of us come into the meaning of the parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven. Or to recall that the church was begun by a "congregation" of twelve,—more rough than diamond, at best, and eight per cent of them traitors! Or to realize that the promise of presence when two or three are gathered together is an honest count and not a figure of speech.

The country church offers admirable opportunities to put to work many of the newer types of church activity, especially where small numbers, or the individual is of special importance. Small cells of prayer have ideal seed-beds in the country. Little discussion groups of serious, interested people talking about religion obviously get more done than a bird talk to a hundred. The Little Compton pastor gives three series of lectures a year in this distant, pastoral village, and can feel after each meeting the tingle of other minds interested in the history or the literature, or the ideas, or the great lives of the church. There is no reason why this does not hold good in many other country parishes,—or to suppose that it does not.

A country church can come into its own when it has an anniversary. Regardless of its size, wealth, or effectiveness, a church of a century or two in age has acquired a wealth of fidelity and constancy to its calling which elevates it in its fellowship. And an anniversary need not be expensive. It need not have special outside friends. All kinds of opportunities lie about it for celebrating its birthday, while the great "upstart" churches of the newer cities look on with unconcealed admiration, beholding the dignity of the country churches which sired them. When the Little Compton church held its two hundred and fiftieth anniversary last year, we wrote to President Eisenhower asking of him a word of greeting. We read his beautiful letter of congratulation at our fourth of July service. It was a great day, but a reality, in the life of a present-day country church. (*Continued on page 25*)

FIRST CLASS — SPECIAL DELIVERY

By GRAHAM R. HODGES

NOT MANY YEARS ago you could sort mail by glancing at the postage. The first class stuff got opened. The two cent and one cent and a half envelopes went straight to the wastebasket or waited later in the day. Appeals, generous book club offers, fantastically benevolent gestures from commercial firms—all these you could spot in an instant.

Not so today. You can still tell a letter from home from a fire sale leaflet but there the distinction stops. Some of the best stuff comes the cheapest way while some material you wouldn't want seen on your desk comes dressed up like a duke at a Coronation Ball.

Charitable groups, counting every penny, enclose their mimeographed story in a two cent envelope. In the same mail, wrought in a handsome brochure, comes a description of the riches you are missing by not investing through Somebody's Investment Company.

Yesterday's mail contained our denominational weekly, a good product considering the budget it operates on. It bravely competes with a national picture news weekly done on the slickest paper in six colors, including sixteen pages of liquor ads. Tenth class stuff going first class style. The King's Message riding the rods.

It takes no discerning prophet to see that we live in a day when superb means are being used for the silliest ends. All the 500 years of progress in the printing trade—the high speed, multicolored, rotary press, the complex science of photography and photoengraving, the wonderful alchemy of paper making—all combined to tell us that distinguished people are switching to Calvert's Whiskey.

We all know the story. It's the same old story—a few million for the United Nations and fifty billion for Mars. A dime for church and a dollar for the movies. Every minister sees it until he thinks he's crazy for making any church pledge at all.

But he has a time and a place to even up this inequity of ends and means. He can make straight a highway for the King, cutting down the hills and filling the low places. For he has a real first class message to deliver once a week—special delivery. Not just a general mailing to "Boxholder, Centerville" but a specially prepared piece of material addressed, literally, to specific people.

A preacher friend of mine recently received a textbook on advertising from a professor with whom he had once worked in an advertising firm. Inscribed in the complimentary copy was: "To Hal, who is still in the advertising business, but selling a much better product." The best product, in fact, *the* product. How many advertising men, brilliant chaps making good money, must chew their pencil erasers and say in envy: "How I wish I could really believe everything I write, like a preacher does!"

That we sometime, or rather often, fail to sell our product does not mean it is inferior. Natural sales resistance, which began in a customer named Adam, accounts for part of the "Sorry, not interested" replies. But too many times the fault is that we deliver the Message in second, third, or fourth class style.

If the Message is prepared in first class style, as it deserves; if it comes straight from the heart of the writer; if it is addressed to specific persons and given special handling, special delivery treatment—there will be results. It has to be sent to John and Mary and Sister Sue—taken directly to them and handed personally with a direct look into the eye.

What about competition from highly paid performers on the radio, television, and in lovely magazines? They're the preacher's best friend. The more the public is saturated with broadcast material the more it will long for the personal touch, specially prepared and specially delivered.

Once there was a Man who not only had a message; he *was* the Message. When the preacher carries this Message around, in pulpit or on the sidewalk, by any means—when people see and hear the Message first hand demonstrated in a first class way, it gets attention. Say, brother, let's quit using two cent stamps Sunday morning.

No Bus to Our Town

(*Continued from page 23*)

So the minister of a country church need not feel buried or lost or in any sad way "put out to pasture," not any more. (I have not called Little Compton a "rural" parish. Actually, the authorities do not either, which I for one do not understand, any more than I do the term, "rural".) On some of his really busy days he may well wonder if he *is* in the country (and on *very* busy days, *what* country!). In the summer, he may find more people in *his* church than at the union services of the big churches in the city. And on the basis of all the foregoing, the solid "stern benefits" of the country which Emerson wrote about, really obtain, and we may laud them with no false note in our voice, nor any look over our shoulder to the city, which is to turn us into a pillar of salt.

There are real limitations still in country life, which is our assurance that we are awake, that we are still in a real world. But the people who want to get to Little Compton will get here. Often they call us up and we go and get them. Meanwhile, with all due love for our fellow-men in general, we observe that many of the problem-children of the human family and their gaudy trappings are kept from the town by our lack of public vehicles, and so the unspoiled beauty of the town survives in its pristine simplicity the "improvements" of "civilization." There is no bus to my town. And very often we feel we have cause to give thanks that this is so.

On the Rural Church

No minister may find a happier lot or live a more effective life than he who, on Sunday morning, crosses a village green or country road to mount the pulpit steps.

—Robert Bruce
The Quarterly, Vol. II, No. 2

INSTALLATION PRAYER

By HERMAN H. LINDEMAN
Douglas, Wyoming

INFINITE AND ETERNAL GOD, who through unrecorded age hast brooded over the objects of thy creation, who in the ripeness of time didst bring forth thy Son from the womb of the race and breathe into his mind the fullness of the Divine Nature; thou Life of the universe, who didst empower him to break the power of sin and put death itself to death, thereby to create the Living Church—

We as a gathered fellowship stand before Thee this night, objects of thy saving grace, and living witness that thine long-ago travail for the creation is not wholely in vain. Humbly and gratefully we praise thee for the unspeakable riches of grace in Christ Jesus—and in the church which is his Body.

As we come together in thy sight, O Lord, and in the presence of this company to sanctify the marriage effected between this congregation and minister, we implore thy renewed blessing upon them—who have already received so abundantly. Facing a new vista of Christian experience together, with possibilities unmeasurable, wilt thou draw them Sabbath by Sabbath to prayerful tarrying in this their Jerusalem. Wilt thou richly empower them in their individual souls and in their Christian undertakings together, that they may walk not in their own feebleness, but in the power of Christ through whom the church has come from nothingness, through consecrated weakness, to world-circling witness and power.

ANNOINT, we pray thee, this new leader, Brother ..... that the Living Christ may be manifestly with him. Going repeatedly himself within the vale, where God is known as though face to face, may he be able to conduct his brethren into that same Holy Presence, where sins are forgiven, where wills are strengthened in goodness, where duties are transfigured into joys, where the heartful service of God and man is the delight of all whose souls are alive in Him.

May this people and pastor so rejoice, so labor and pray, so share in the Kingdom stewardship that their church shall be a shining light in this shadowed world, a temple of the Holy Spirit where God blesses those who abide in Him. — And unto Thee shall be all glory and honor, majesty and power, both now and evermore. AMEN

IN DEFENSE OF A COLLEAGUE

By J. ELLSWORTH KALAS

MOST OF US PREACHERS, with fine disregard for professional bonds, deal pretty harshly with the priest whose neglect made the Good Samaritan famous. Granted, he makes a good whipping boy, this ecclesiastic who could turn his back on human suffering. But before we sermonize too vigorously we might recall how akin his sins are to our own.

I first came into new sympathy with this priest one winter Sunday morning as I hurried between services on a two-point charge. Even in good weather I was pressed by the tight schedule and the twelve-mile run, but on a morning such as this, with snow swirling over my windshield and a frightening glaze on the road, my only hope was to be as little late as possible. And then, just a short distance ahead, I saw a family trying to push a car back onto the road. I knew my helping hand could easily make the difference, perhaps save them from a ten dollar towing charge and help them reach their church service. But to lend help would make me eight or ten minutes late for the worship service I was to lead. I drove by, with shame—and suddenly, I felt very close to the priest who was afraid to attend to a man by the side of the road. After all, the man might be dead, and if the priest should touch a dead man he would be unable to minister according to schedule the following Sabbath. Or perhaps the man's condition wasn't serious enough to merit delaying the priest in fulfilling some clerical obligation.

Since then I have felt this brother priest's spirit brood over me on many occasions. In only ten minutes I must leave for a committee meeting, and the doorbell rings. It is a soul in distress, come without appointment—for so often the soul in distress forgets all about such conventions as appointments and date-books. I listen nervously to a problem that deserves intense attention, struggling all the while over whether I should be late for the committee meeting or draw this conversation to an unsatisfactory and hasty conclusion.

Some ministers, under such circumstances, have mastered techniques which would have made our priest look like a bumbling novice. They have perfected the art of arising with vigor (few callers are so dull of social understanding or so overwhelmed by their problem as to remain seated when the man behind the desk arises), grasping the hand of their caller, and saying, "Let's just have a word of prayer about this *before you leave.*" But no matter how delicately one administers this technique, the fact remains that the man who has been beaten by robbers is left lying on the roadside—whether he realizes it or not—while we hurry off on the other side.

Then there is the telephone. It seems always to ring when one is in the throes of sermon preparation or hat-in-hand for an appointment. Shall we let it ring, remembering that it most likely will be a trivial matter, or shall we stop, in the belief that it may be a man by the side of the road? And if it is a man who has recently been attacked by life's thieves, shall we hear his tale while our sermon lies untended or our appointment is violated, or shall we accelerate to a conclusion?

MIND YOU, I TRIED for a while to be a Good Samaritan at all times. When the needy soul dropped in just before the committee meeting, I heard him out and ignored the clock until I had done my best to help. But I discovered that my committees, Young Adult groups, and Teachers' Training Sessions were not

over-indulgent when I apologized for my fifteen minutes tardiness by explaining that I had been ministering to an emergency need. And after half a dozen such incidents, spread over a good period of time, I heard rumors that some were saying, "The Reverend's always late, isn't he?"

Furthermore, just how serious is the need of that man by the side of my road? Are his wounds critical enough to deserve the disrupting of my schedule and the people in it? This is a question I am rarely able to answer, even after I have studied the wounds at length and have attempted to bind them up. For the wounds of the soul are not as easily measured as an abrasion or a laceration; what seems to me to be a problem of passing and casual depth may seem to its owner to be altogether crucial—and in his case, he may be right. That is, the problem which one man surmounts rather easily may be enough to crush the second man, given the second man's background and personality structure. How can I say, then, that my caller's case is not critical?

So my heart goes out to that priest of Luke, chapter ten. Mind you, I don't mean by this to justify his neglect nor his twisted sense of what-is and what-is-not important. Neither would I want in any way to minimize the heroism of the great-hearted Samaritan. I only know that I do not find it easy to condemn this erring priest, nor does he seem such a pat sermon illustration. For I know him now not only as a professional colleague, but I have found, in the experiences of our high calling, that he is very much my brother.

On Counseling

THE PASTOR IS IN A strategic position for personal counseling because he knows the people. He is among them. He is their friend. He knows their backgrounds, their families. He sees neuroses which never get to a psychiatrist, hears legal problems which never reach a lawyer, is in on family difficulties which are never taken to a marriage clinic. He is in a strategic position to do this work because people will open up and talk to him. He is in a strategic position because he knows life and human relationships. He is not so specialized that he sees only one angle. He is in a strategic position because faith in God, new attitudes and ways of life—ways of repentance, forgiveness, tolerance, and love—are so tragically needed in almost every case and frequently are the only means of help.

—ALLEN L. IRWIN
The Quarterly, Vol. III, No. 2

On Religious Reading

NEVER WAS IT EASIER to get people to read than today. Never was reading more popular. By promoting the circulation of religious books and periodicals a minister can enrich and enlarge the total of instruction received by his people in such a way as to multiply his influence and strengthen his church.

—JOHN R. SCOTFORD
The Quarterly, Vol. II, No. 2

THE MINISTER AND THE WORLD CHURCH
Editor: GEORGE WILLIAMS WEBBER
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THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT LOOKS AT EVANGELISM

THE STUDIES OF EVANGELISM by the World Council of Churches provide the minister with a thoughtful national and international concensus of opinion on theological presuppositions and methods of action that have a striking relevance in his parish situation. American liberal Protestantism has been characterized by emotional reactions against traditional evangelistic methods which have undercut in many areas a serious analysis and constructive reappraisal of the means by which the distinctive elements of the Christian faith can be presented.

Secular Tendencies

Our nation tends either to be secular or to pervert the decisive elements of the Gospel into a mold more compatible with the idealistic and humanistic thinking of the American people. The contribution of other churches in this country, as well as the experiences of Christians in other lands, gives a perspective in many cases which is free from the peculiar cultural limitations of a particular church or denomination in the particular country of America. To a considerable extent each American denomination takes on the attitudes of its lay and clerical leadership.

A Corrective

The Christian Gospel contains within itself the means for criticism of distortions of this type, but it is often necessary to look beyond our own situation to find a means of interpreting the Christian faith as a judgment against the limitations of our position.

Evangelism is a persistent motif in Christianity with its assumption that it has the "good news" for all men, but it has potential and actual distortion in the American Protestant Church which can look to the insights of other churches for correction and reaffirmation.

The second assembly of the World Council of Churches held at Evanston, Illinois, in August, 1954, was the most widely representative church gathering ever held, in which 163 churches from 48 countries were represented. This extensive concensus of Christian thought is of exceptional importance, for while its results are not binding on any church or individual, their implications for the thinking of Christians everywhere are apparent. The report of Section II, the mission of the Church to those outside her life, has aroused thoughtful Americans to an evaluation and reaffirmation of the centrality of evangelism in the life of the Church.

Theological Basis

One of the most significant aspects of the work of this commission is the attempt to present in a present-day context the theological affirmations of the primitive Christian Church as a basis for its evangelism. Jesus Christ is the gospel that Christians proclaim, for he is the apostle of God sent by the world to redeem it. Christ has given meaning to life, an answer to sin, an explanation of history, and an alternative to death. Where man was hopeless, Christ has given hope. The Church is the community which is able

EDITOR'S NOTES

This article is the result of an effort to reproduce in brief compass the substance of a good deal of work done by the World Council in the past six years in one of its main areas of concern: Evangelism. The material is not original, and the editor acknowledges his debt to several graduate students at Union Theological Seminary for doing the spade work which made the articles possible.

to affirm the truth of the revelation of God in Christ; called by God as the sign and sharer of the life and work of Jesus Christ, the Church's existence is a miracle of grace. It is given the opportunity to evangelize by participating in the ministry of Christ and the proclamation of God's mighty acts to the world. This proclamation is the ministry of God become man, of Christ's life on earth, of his resurrection, of his intercession, and of his coming again. The Church lives in the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit, who changes the lives of sinful men in response to the Christian witness to the gospel of redemption. The gospel is preached because the Lord is risen and the new age has begun, and we persist in preaching until the full disclosure of his glory appears.

Resources of Vitality

These eschatological and kerygmatic elements in the Christian affirmation contain the resources for an evangelical vitality in the Christian Church, but such aspects have often been neglected in our American churches. The loss in Christian thinking of the eschatological sense of urgency and responsibility placed upon the individual Christian and upon the community bearing the saving message may well be the cause of the apparent failure of many churches to be evangelizing churches.

At any rate, the attempt to define an ecumenical interpretation of the Christian faith must lead the minister to question seriously the foundations of his own preaching, to realize that any attempt at outreach in the local community is predicated on theological presuppositions, and that any effort at local evangelism must be conscious of these assumptions if it is to be effective.

Perhaps the barrenness of American preaching indicates that evangelism does not take place in a theological vacuum. The rapidly expanding churches of our country are an indication that people are coming expecting a meaningful presentation of the Christian message, and the minister must decide what aspects of the faith are particularly suited to the emotional and religious needs of his congregation. The results of discussion by leading ministers, church leaders, and laymen of the world provide a basis on which such an evaluation can be made.

New Techniques

Much concrete benefit can be gained by studying explorations made in other countries toward solving estrangement or indifference to the message of the Church. In Europe, for example, the great mass of the people are alienated from the churches. This situation is particularly apparent among the laboring classes, where it has been historically determined by the indifference of dominant circles in the Church to the needs of workers even up to the time of the great depression, and the failure of Christians to associate themselves with the trade unions and the developing Social Democratic parties. In addition, the disparity between church membership and actual religious participation in such countries as Germany, Sweden, and England aggravates indifference to the responsibilities placed on Christians in the Church. The value of this situation for the American minister is that in many parishes similar difficulties are prevalent. In many northern industrial cities the middle-class Protestant Church has alienated the dominant economic group in the community, the laborers. In many southern areas people are members of the church without even thinking about it. It is in areas like this that the importance of traditional forms of evangelism is most apparent. Mass methods of evangelism have assumed the existence of a Christian community in which everyone had responsibilities, to which the indifferent could be recalled and the converted brought. We must realize that such a community does not exist, and that to assume its existence frequently results in an increase of fervor among those active in the Church, but an alienation of those groups already outside the life of the Church.

The most prominent developments in the European Church have come from a candid confrontation of these disturbing facts and a determination to recover for the Church its distinctive meaning for all society. Some of the techniques being used are: 1) the creation of fellowship groups in which Christian people become a nucleus around which others slowly gather and discover or rediscover the meaning of life in Christ; and 2) an increasing awareness on the part of the churches that its parochial outlook must change and that the gap between itself and particular segments of society must be overcome.

Experiments

Such experiments as the entrance of the Church into factories or professional and intellectual groups is not a negation of traditional worship patterns, but an attempt to show those who see Christianity as unrelated to their actual life the relationship between Christianity and their own existence. A number of experiments in industrial chaplaincies have attempted to gain the confidence of the laborers by showing a concern for them rather than primarily a desire to gain their support for the organized Church. In the United States experiments on an ecumenical level or by other denominations designed to regain estranged and antagonistic groups are the East Harlem Protestant Parish, evangelism among the coal miners of West Virginia, evangelism for intellectuals in the form of lecture series on religious and philosophical issues, and Christian evangelism in the universities on both a denominational and inter-denominational basis. In both Europe and the United States the greatest problem is the lack of imaginative and creative suggestions for new work of this type. Perhaps in your community there is a group with little or no relationship to the Church, which can be attracted only by a new strategy.

Criticisms and Suggestions

The studies of the World Council have certain criticisms and suggestions for American churches. Since 1945 in this country churches of almost every denomination have carried on evangelistic projects with a zeal greater than at any time in this century. Too often, however, they are directed toward reclaiming nominal or inactive Christians, rather than converting the unbaptized; and they tend to be conducted in such a mechanical, large-scale way that they lack a personal element with lasting effects, and statistical quantity is more highly appraised in evaluation than permanent spiritual quality. The latter is reflected in the tendency of many churches to concentrate on suburbia where potential membership is high, without attempting to formulate new means by which urban masses and isolated rural areas can be best served in periods of shifting cultures.

On the credit side American churches are realizing to a greater extent than ever before the essential role of the laity in evangelism. In addition, there are many more interdenominational programs than before, especially through the National Council of Churches, but manifested concretely in local cooperative efforts among the churches of individual communities. A number of resources have been used, which are open to more adequate development, such as training laymen in visitation-evangelism, the use of data resulting from psychological and sociological studies, conferences and retreats, pastors' schools of evangelism, radio and television broadcasting, motion pictures and filmstrips, newspaper advertising, and religious books and periodicals. Perhaps the most serious difficulty any evangelistic campaign faces is the religious illiteracy of even extremely active members of the Church. Evangelism brings before the minds of parishioners the decisive elements of the Christian faith, forcing them to realize the implications of which might previously have been a passive acceptance

of and participation in the life of the Church.

Opportunities and Problems

A survey of the evangelistic situation on a world scale reveals clearly many special opportunities, particularly present where unsolved problems impair the effectiveness of the Christian witness.

In the first place, there are two great areas of concern in the training of Christian workers. One is that training for evangelism is inadequate in the theological curriculum; the other is that there is need for extended programs for the training not merely of pastors, but of full-time lay workers.

Secondly, the use of impersonal methods of evangelism such as radio and television has raised the question whether this is true evangelism or not. Is it not possible that the extensive use of these media by the churches will lead to a further dilution of the Christian message and encourage great numbers to suppose themselves Christian believers because they listen occasionally to a religious broadcast?

Thirdly, in the younger churches of Asia and Africa, the renascence of old religions has been identified with political nationalism. Christians in these lands are often under great pressure to conform to these new politico-religious ideologies without being conscious of their religious roots. In some cases an aggressive nationalism allied with religious interests may so limit Christian activities that evangelism is impossible. In America a cultural nationalism substituted for Christianity is a form of this problem which demands a different strategy from that used in the younger churches.

Finally, united evangelism offers a possible answer to the difficulties faced by churches as they seek to reach the many segments of society now unaffected by their influence. Cooperating churches, however, cannot avoid the pressing questions of the content of the Christian message and the nature of the Church. It is possible that united evangelism will contribute in this respect to the solution of some of the unresolved questions still being debated among the theologians of different churches in the World Council.

Literature Available

A considerable body of literature has been built up on evangelism which any parish minister would do well to obtain and read. The office of the World Council of Churches at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, can furnish lists of reading material. Three pamphlets are of especial value for anyone attempting to learn of the activities of the World Council. One is the Evanston Report, "Evanston Speaks," containing the message of the assembly and the reports of the various commissions, including the report on the mission of the Church to those outside her life. Another is a survey of world evangelism, tracing problems and suggested solutions in all areas of the world, called "Evangelism—the Mission of the Church to Those Outside Her Life." The final recommendation is "An Evangelizing Church" by D. T. Niles, a perceptive and fascinating analysis of problems in the presentation of the Christian message in a non-Christian world, with particular emphasis on the churches of Asia and Africa. All of these materials may be obtained at the World Council office.

To forget God is more fatal than to deny Him.

—Maude Peters
My Way of Faith